

April 2014



# Senior Health and Wellness Newsletter

Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living

## Why Exercise?

Exercise is one of the most important things we can do to stay healthy. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it can help to prevent many of the health problems that come along with aging.

### Benefits of Exercise

- ⇒ Helps your muscles to stay strong so you can continue to do the things you enjoy.
- ⇒ Helps to prevent or delay many diseases and disabilities.
- ⇒ People who suffer from arthritis, heart disease, or diabetes benefit from regular exercise.
- ⇒ Helps control your weight, high blood pressure, and diabetes.
- ⇒ Helps with balance problems or difficulty walking.
- ⇒ Helps to manage stress and improves your mood.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, inactive people are nearly twice as likely to develop heart disease as those who are more active. Not exercising can lead to more doctor visits, stays in the hospital, and medicines.

### How much exercise do I need?

CDC recommends 2 1/2 to 5 hours per week of aerobic activity. In addition to this, it is recommended that we do muscle strengthening activities 2 days per week.



### What is exercise?

Exercise can include any activity that gets you moving such as gardening, walking, or cleaning.

Aerobic activity is sometimes referred to as cardio. It gets your heart beating faster and makes you breathe a little harder. This could include walking at a brisk pace, biking, or dancing.

Muscle strengthening exercise includes using weights, resistance bands, yoga, exercises that use your body like sit ups or push ups, or activities like digging in the garden.

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## Getting Started

Here are some tips for becoming more active.

- \* It is always best to check with your doctor before you start exercising. Your doctor will tell you what exercises are safe for you to do and what to avoid.
- \* Make it a priority to include exercise in your day. It is easy to come up with excuses not to exercise. Plan ahead to include it into your day.
- \* Make it easy. Do something that is cheap and convenient.
  - \* Such as going to the senior center to participate in exercise opportunities. Most senior centers have exercise equipment and exercise classes available.
  - \* If at home, try walking in place or stretching during commercials on TV. If you can not stand for long periods of time, try moving your arms during commercials.
- \* Make exercise a part of your daily routine. Try moving more when you are doing your normal daily tasks. Use the time you talk on the telephone to move. You could walk around the room or just move your legs and arms while you sit.
- \* Plan to exercise safely. Only participate in activities that your doctor says are safe for you. Start slowly and gradually build up. If you feel strong pain or sick to your stomach you have probably done too much.

### For more information:

- American Heart Association—<http://www.heart.org/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—<http://www.cdc.gov/>
- Choose My Plate—<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- National Institutes of Health—<http://nihseniorhealth.gov/>

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